

Message Text

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SUBJ CANADIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION COMMISSION HEARINGS IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA IN FEBRUARY

SUMMARY: IN HEARINGS NEXT MONTH CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION WILL SEEK APPROVAL FROM CANADIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION COMMISSION (CRTC) TO OPERATE NEW FRENCH LANGUAGE UHF STATION IN VANCOUVER AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE UHF STATION IN VICTORIA. THESE ADDITIONS ALONG WITH NEW VANCOUVER COMMERCIAL UHF STATION APPROVED BY CRTC LAST SPRING MAY RESULT IN THREE U.S. STATIONS PRESENTLY CARRIED BY VANCOUVER CABLE COMPANIES BEING MOVED OR DROPPED FROM CLEAR VHF CABLE CHANNELS.

1. CANADIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION COMMISSION (CRTC) HAS SCHEDULED HEARINGS BEGINNING FEBRUARY 2 IN VANCOUVER AND FEBRUARY 5 IN VICTORIA. AGENDA HAS ALREADY AROUSED LARGE PUBLIC OUTCRY LOCALLY. IN VANCOUVER COMMISSION WILL HEAR CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (CBC) APPLICATION FOR FRENCH LANGUAGE TELEVISION STATION IN VANCOUVER. BRITISH COLUMBIA HAS ESTIMATED 10,000 FRANCOPHONES OF WHICH IPP ESTIMATED UNILINGUAL. PETITION AGAINST STATION HAS BEEN STARTED AND ORGANIZERS CLAIM THOUSANDS OF SIGNATURES.

2. SEVERAL NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS CLAIM PETITION IS RACIST AND
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NOTE B.C. ONLY PROVINCE WITHOUT FRENCH LANGUAGE TELEVISION

STATION. CBC PRESENTLY HAS FRENCH LANGUAGE FM RADIO STATION IN VANCOUVER, CBUF-FM. PETITION ORGANIZERS SAY OBJECTIONS TO STATION BASED ON FACT THAT ITS ESTABLISHMENT WILL FORCE U.S. STATION PRESENTLY ON CABLEVISION OFF CLEAR CABLE CHANNEL. CABLEVISION PENETRATION IN VANCOUVER REPORTED AMONG HIGHEST IN WORLD WITH ESTIMATED 78 PERCENT OF ALL SETS ON CABLE.

3. PETITION ORGANIZERS ALSO CRITICIZE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATION NOW IN VIEW OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ECONOMY CAMPAIGN. LOCAL CBC DIRECTOR ADMITS CBC HAS ALREADY PURCHASED AND INSTALLED STUDIO AND TRANSMITTER EQUIPMENT BEFORE CRTC HEARING OR APPLICATION APPROVAL.

4. COMMISSION WILL ALSO HEAR APPLICATION FROM LOCAL CABLEVISION COMPANY TO MOVE U.S. SEATTLE STATION KIRO CHANNEL 7 TO UNUSED CABLE CHANNEL. HOWEVER NO REMAINING UNUSED CHANNELS CAN BE RECEIVED CLEARLY IN ALL VANCOUVER AREAS. KIRO IS IBS AFFILIATE. CABLE COMPANY SELECTED KIRO OF FOUR SEATTLE STATIONS CARRIED BECAUSE MOST PROGRAMS DUPLICATED BY U.S. CBS AFFILIATE KVOS LOCATED BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON 20 MILES FROM CANADIAN BORDER. CABLE COMPANIES MUST MOVE U.S. STATION TO MAKE ROOM ON THEIR VHF DIAL FOR NEW UHF VANCOUVER STATION APPROVED BY CRTC IN HEARINGS LAST SPRING, AND SCHEDULED TO BEGIN OPERATIONS IN SEPTEMBER. THIS STATION OPERATED BY WESTERN APPROACHES LIMITED AND PREVIOUSLY SLATED FOR UHF CHANNEL 26 WILL MOVE TO CHANNEL 21 BECAUSE CBC PURCHASED EQUIPMENT FOR NEW FRENCH LANGUAGE STATION DESIGNED FOR CHANNEL 26 OPERATION. CBC WILL PAY CONVERSION COSTS INVOLVED.

5. MATTERS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY CRTC VICTORIA HEARINGS ON APPLICATION FOR CBC STATION THERE. PRESENTLY ONLY VICTORIA STATION IS PRIVATE AFFILIATE OF CBC, CHEK-TV. NEW CBC STATION WILL PROMPT CHEK TO SWITCH COMPLETELY TO LOCAL AND ITV PROGRAMS SINCE ONLY CTV AFFILIATED STATION IN B.C. IS CHAN IN VANCOUVER. VICTORIA-BASED CHEK CARRIED BY VANCOUVER CABLEVISION ALTHOUGH ALMOST ALL LOCAL ADVERTISEMENTS PRESENTLY AIMED AT VICTORIA AND VANCOUVER ISLAND MARKET. OPERATORS OF NEW VANCOUVER UHF STATION ARE ASKING CRTC TO REMOVE CHEK FROM VANCOUVER CABLEVISION BECAUSE THEY VIEW IT AS NEW

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COMPETITION WHEN CBC BEGINS OWN STATION IN VICTORIA.

6. VANCOUVER CABLE OPERATORS STATE THEY WILL TEMPORARILY MOVE U.S. STATIONS BUMPED FROM CLEAR CHANNELS TO UNUSED VHF CHANNELS UNTIL THEY CAN INSTALL SIGNAL SPLITTERS TO EXPAND CABLE DIAL SEVERAL-FOLD. THIS WILL REQUIRE INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIBERS PURCHASE DEVICE COSTING ESTIMATED DLS 75-100. PROSPECT NOT WELL RECEIVED LOCALLY. CABLE COMPANIES ARGUE

DEVICES WIDELY USED IN CANADA AND U.S. WITH ESTIMATED
100,000 IN USE TORONTO ALONE.

7. COMMENT: IF BOTH CBC STATIONS APPROVED TOTAL THREE U.S.
STATIONS WILL BE MOVED FROM CLEAR CHANNELS. POST BELIEVES
CABLE COMPANIES WILL REQUEST CRTC TO ALLOW THREE SEATTLE
AFFILIATES OF U.S. COMMERCIAL NETWORK TO BE MOVED, LEAVING
SEATTLE PBS AFFILIATE AND BELLINGHAM KVOS ON CLEAR BASIC
CABLE CHANNELS. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF CURRENT REVENUE AND
TAX QUESTIONS CRTC MAY INSIST ON BELLINGHAM STATION BEING
MOVED. THREE SEATTLE COMMERCIAL STATIONS DO NOT INCLUDE
CANADA IN RATE BASES, AND CARRY ALMOST NO ADVERTISING AIMED
AT CANADIAN MARKET SPECIFICALLY.
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